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## INSCRIPTIONS IN THE SYNAGOGUE IN KAI-FUNG-FOO

BY DAVID S. D. SASSOON, London.

THE following article is in connexion with the important document (Codex Sassoon, No. 456) which has lately come to me as a gift from my cousin Mr. Reuben D. E. J. Abraham of Shanghai, whose father is one of the leaders of the community and an indefatigable worker there, and who himself was also the president of the Society for the Rescue of the Chinese Jews *חברה לעזרת בני ישראל הצינים*—now defunct—which was formed in 1900.

Father Jerome Tobar in his *Inscriptions juives de K'ai-fong-fou*, published by the Catholic Mission, Shanghai, 1912, mentions that they had lately received from Rome several documents relating to the Synagogue in Kai-fung-foo. Among these was a copy of several inscriptions which decorated the Synagogue, and which had been sent to Rome by missionaries, and very likely by Pater Gozani himself who discovered the inscriptions suspended in the Synagogue at Kai-fung-foo in 1702.

Tobar also mentions having used for his publication, copies of hanging inscriptions which G. Devéria himself had made, and also the diary of the two Chinese envoys sent to Kai-fung-foo by the London Society for Promoting Christianity among the Jews, entitled *The Jews at Kae-fung-foo*, published by the Rev. G. Smith, Shanghai, 1851.

My manuscript gives the Principles only, whereas Tobar has complete copies of the twenty-three horizontal and

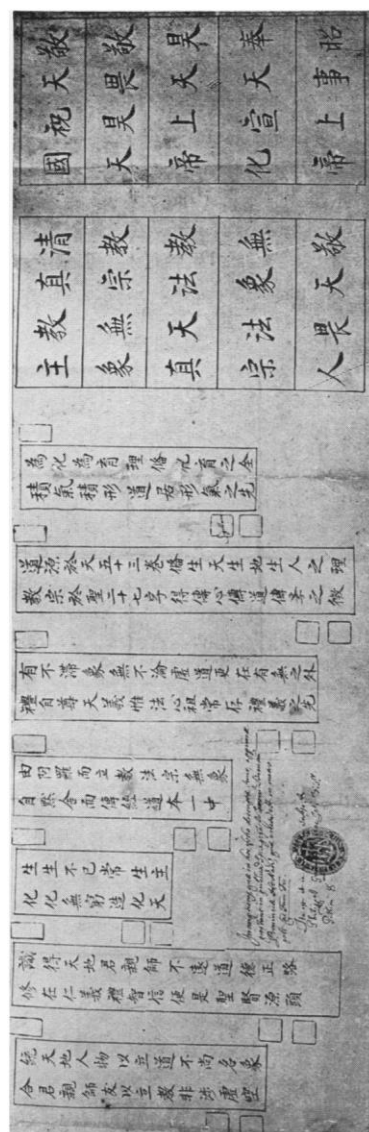


FIG. 1. REDUCED FACSIMILE OF CODEX SASSOON NO. 456

seventeen vertical hanging inscriptions. Nearly all his inscriptions have the date, and some have also the names of the donors or the names of the scribes who wrote them after having washed their hands, and in some cases all three are mentioned. In the horizontal inscriptions these are given in vertical lines on the right and left of the text. Most of the horizontal ones are dated, the earliest being 1656, and the latest, 1679. Of the seventeen vertical, five are dated, four being 1668, and one 1676.

The manuscript which is in my possession consists of one long sheet of very thin Chinese paper of a yellowish tinge. It measures  $30\frac{1}{8}$  inches by an average of  $9\frac{9}{16}$  inches wide.

First of all I shall give a copy of the testimony in Latin, written, signed, and sealed by the Jesuit Visitor in 1705, as follows:

‘Inscriptiones, quae in hoc folio descriptae sunt, appensae prostant in publica Synagoga Iudaeorũ Sinensiũ Provinciae Ho Nan, quae erecta est in metropoli *Cai Fum Fu*.

Ita est, et in hunc fidem subscripsi  
 Philippus Grimaldi e soc Ies. Visr.  
 Pe Kim 8<sup>us</sup> 9bris 1705.’

(Translation.)

The inscriptions, which are written out on this page, stand hanging in the public Synagogue of the Chinese Jews of the Province Ho Nan, which is erected in the metropolis Cai Fum Fu.

Thus it is, and in witness hereof I have signed  
 Philip Grimaldi of the Soc. of Jes. Visitor  
 Pe Kin 8th November, 1705.

The seal, of which the colour is red, reads as follows: 'Societatis Iesu Vis. Iap. et Chin.' (Society of Jesus Visitor, Japan and China).

My document has seventeen inscriptions, ten horizontal and seven vertical. Gozani, in 1702, gave seven horizontal and five vertical. From the dates we know that all the hanging inscriptions must have been in the synagogue when Gozani visited it, but it is not improbable that the missionary was not allowed to enter the place where some of the inscriptions were. Finn, in *The Orphan Colony of Jews in China*, p. 62, says: 'The men told us that several strangers had before tried to enter, but they would not allow them to do so, because many of them were merely pretended professors of their religion', and the following is in a foot-note: 'Were these the Jesuit missionaries of the previous century?' The same author on p. 65 gives an incomplete copy of an inscription, and remarks: 'While engaged in copying the above, before I had quite finished the sentence, a man of the name of K'heaou, who had attained a literary degree, came and drove me unceremoniously out of the temple, telling me to be careful of what I was doing.'

My manuscript, which is in Chinese from right to left, is written very carefully in a most beautiful hand. The ten horizontal inscriptions are in large and bold characters, whilst those of the vertical ones are much smaller. Each vertical inscription has three seals, one quadrangle seal at the right-hand top, and two square ones at the left-hand bottom. In the top square of the first vertical inscription is written the word *sigillum*, which shows that all the quadrangles and squares are meant for seals. It is usual with the Chinese to put their seals on nearly everything they make.

It should be noted that on comparing the horizontal inscriptions in my manuscript with Tobar's book, I find three slight variations: in Nos. 6 (Tobar, No. 14), 7 (Tobar, No. 10), and 8 (Tobar, No. 8), namely, the second character in No. 6 and the fourth character in No. 8, reading from right to left, both being the same, differ in the same way from Tobar's, and in No. 7, the fourth character varies from Tobar's. It is remarkable that inscription No. 10 in my manuscript is not given by Tobar at all, notwithstanding that he has as many as twenty-three horizontal ones. The following are the respective dates of the inscriptions which I have taken from Tobar's work. The numbers refer to the order in which they come in the manuscript.

	Nos.	Dates.
Horizontal:	1	1678
	2	1670
	3	1658
	4	1661
	5	1656
	6	1679
	7	1658
	8	1656
	9	1670
Vertical:	11	1668
	12	1668
	13	1676
	14, 15, 16, no dates.	

The following is an interesting example of the manner in which one of the dates is given. I have copied it from Tobar (p. 27, Inscription 12). This date would belong to No. 11 in the manuscript:—

‘The inscription has been hung on a happy day on the

1st decade of the 9th moon of the year meou-chen [1668]. It is Ngai-Fou-cheng, member of the noble [Jewish] Religion, who, after having washed his hands, respectfully wrote this inscription.'

The English translation was also very kindly sent to me by Mr. Abraham. It was done by Mr. Charles Budd of the Tung Wen Kwan Translation Office, Shanghai, from whose letter to Mr. Abraham, I give the following interesting extract: 'The inscription is an attempt to express foreign theological and philosophical terms in Chinese, and such documents are much more difficult to translate than purely Chinese documents, especially when the ideas to be conveyed from one language to the other are abstract or abstruse. In some cases it is extremely doubtful whether the original ideas are clearly conveyed in the Chinese terms of the Inscriptions, as some of these terms would bear different renderings. My translation is somewhat stiff, but it follows the apparent meaning of the original closely.'

The 'fifty-three chapters' mentioned in inscription No. 12 *a*, are the weekly Parashiyoth which make up the annual cycle of the Pentateuch. This is in accordance with the list of weekly Parashiyoth given by Maimonides in the *Yad Haḥazaka* at the end of הלכות ברכות, the number of which is fifty-three, נצבים (Deut. 29. 9—Deut. 30) and ילך (*ibid.*, 31) being counted as one Parasha. From the fragments of the manuscript prayer-books from Kai-fung-foo we see that the Chinese Jews, like the Persian Jews, followed the ritual laid down by Maimonides. The rubrics in those manuscripts are all in Persian, and most of the Pizmonim therein also exist among the Persian Jews. This shows that at least during the last few centuries the Kai-fung-foo colony received their Jewish education from Persia.

There is also other evidence of this. It is from a twelfth-century manuscript of a Masoretic Pentateuch (Codex Sassoon, No. 158) of Persian or Babylonian-Persian origin, which I acquired when in Baghdad in 1910. In this Codex each Parasha is carefully indicated in the margin by the word פֶּרֶשׁ within an illuminated design. In the case of the Parasha וַיֵּלֶךְ it is not so marked but it is treated as a continuation of the preceding Parasha נַעֲבִים. In my Farḥi Bible (Codex Sassoon, No. 368, dated 1366-83) also, the number of פֶּרָשִׁיּוֹת is given at the end of the Pentateuch as fifty-three. There are three Masoretic lists in that manuscript in all of which נַעֲבִים וַיֵּלֶךְ are treated as a single Parasha.<sup>1</sup> By the way, I may remark that I found several fragments of Judeo-Persian songs in the binding of my Baghdad manuscript.

The next thing we find are the six words the mnemonic sign of which is בִּיחַ שְׁמוֹ, as to which the Masorah prescribes that they should, respectively, be written 'at the beginning of the line and at the top of the column, in the scrolls of the Law'. They are:

(1) בְּרֵאשִׁית (Gen. 1. 1), (2) יְהוּדָה (*ibid.*, 49. 8), (3) הַבְּאִים (Exod. 14. 28), (4) שְׁמֵר וּשְׁמֵעַת (Deut. 12. 28), (5) מוֹצֵא שְׁפָתֶיךָ (*ibid.*, 23. 24), (6) וְאֶעִידָה בָּם (*ibid.*, 31. 28). The scrolls of the Law which were brought from Kai-fung-foo, however, differ from this order in two instances, namely, instead of יְהוּדָה they have יִשְׁשַׁכַּר חֲמוּר נֶרָם (Gen. 49. 14), and instead of שְׁמֵר וּשְׁמֵעַת they have שְׁפָטִים וּשְׁטָרִים (Deut. 16. 18). These differences are in complete agreement with my Baghdad manuscript, which, as I have already said, is of Persian

<sup>1</sup> It is extraordinary that in this manuscript the passage beginning אֵם כֶּסֶף תְּלוּחָה (Exod. 22. 24) is treated as a Parasha and a special Haftara given for it, namely, Jeremiah 31. 30 to 33. 16.





FIG. 2. REDUCED FACSIMILE OF A PAGE FROM THE BAGHDAD MS. (CODEX SASSOON NO. 158)



FIG. 3. REDUCED FACSIMILE OF A COLUMN FROM THE RABBI SHEM TOB BIBLE (CODEX SASSOON NO. 82) WITH THE MARGINAL RUBRICS ON THE RIGHT.

origin. It is a matter of gratification to prove, I think, for the first time, that these two remarkable deviations from the Masorah are not in any way due to mistakes or carelessness, but are strictly in accordance with certain ancient Codices which are now lost. Proof of this is to be found in the famous model Codex of the Bible (Codex Sassoon, No. 82), written by Rabbi Shem Ṭob ben Rabbi Abraham ben Gaon (הרב מגדל עון) and completed in Soria, in Spain, in the year 5072 (= 1311-12). Here, against the name יהודה (Gen. 49. 8), the following important rubric is given in the margin: י"ד דבִּיה שְׁמוֹ רִישׁ דְּפֶא בִּסְפֶר תּוֹרָה . וּבִסְפֶר : יהודה—*the Yod of שְׁמוֹ* should be at the beginning of the column in the scroll of the Law; but in the Codices of the 'Azaroth (or Court), it is the Yod of יששכר (*ibid.*, 49. 14). Likewise, lower down, against יששכר (*ibid.*), the Masorah remarks: בִּסְפֶרִי הָעוֹר ו' רִישׁ דְּפֶא וּפּוֹלָג—*in the Codices of the 'Azaroth it is at the beginning of the column, and there is a difference of opinion about it.* These 'Codices of the 'Azaroth' are those Codices which the Talmud Yerushalmi (Ta'anith 4. 2) says, were found in the Court of the Temple, as follows:

ג' ספרים מצאו בעזרה ספר מעוני וספר זעטוטי וספר היא בא' מצאו כתוב מעון אלהי קדם ובשנים כתיב מענה אלהי קדם וקיימו שנים ובטלו א' בא' מצאו כתוב וישלח את זעטוטי בני ישראל ובשנים כתוב וישלח את נערי בני ישראל וקיימו שנים ובטלו א' בא' מצאו כתוב תשע היא ובשנים כתיב י"א היא וקיימו שנים ובטלו אחד:

Three Codices were found in the Court [of the Temple], Codex *Me'oni*, and Codex *Za'atuti*, and Codex *Hi*. In one [Codex] they found written מעון אלהי קדם (Deut. 33. 27), and in [the other] two [Codices] מענה אלהי קדם, the [reading of the] two [Codices] was confirmed and [that of the] one [Codex] was abandoned. In one [Codex] they found

written וישלח את זעמוטי בני ישראל (Exod. 24. 5), and in [the other] two [Codices] וישלח את נערי בני ישראל, the [reading of the] two [Codices] was confirmed and [that of the] one [Codex] was abandoned. In one [Codex] they found [the word] היא written nine times [with *yod*], and in [the other] two [Codices] היא eleven [times], the [reading of the] two [Codices] was confirmed and [that of the] one [Codex] was abandoned.

(Translation.)

1

Reverence Heaven and pray for blessings on the country.

2

Reverence and fear the Glorious Heaven.

3

The Glorious Heaven—the Supreme Ruler!

4

By Heaven's command proclaim (the principles).

5

Intelligently serve the Supreme Ruler.

6

Lord of the Pure and True Religion.

7

Images have no part in this Religion.

8

The Law of this Religion is Heaven's Truth.

9

Image (worship) is not a part of this Law.

10

Reverence Heaven and respect men.

11

*a.* [He] creates and nourishes; [His] Doctrine contains all production and sustenance;

*b.* [He] collected together the breath and settled the forms: the Doctrine existed before form and breath.

12

*a.* The Source of the Doctrine is from Heaven; fifty-three chapters contain the complete Doctrine of the production of the heavens, the earth, and men.

*b.* The foundation of the Religion is in holiness; twenty-seven characters (27 = 22 letters and 5 finals) can transmit the hidden meaning of mind, doctrine, and learning.

13

*a.* Although existing (it) is not in images; although not (existing) (it) is not lost in vacuity: the Doctrine is still outside the existing and non-existing.

*b.* Ritual is (derived) from honour given to Heaven; righteousness is the law of the heart; (but the Source) always existed before ritual and righteousness.

14

*a.* This Religion was established by Ah-lo; the principles of the Law do not (permit) images;

*b.* The Scriptures were transmitted by Mēh-shê: the Doctrine is the original and true one.

15

*a.* Unceasingly producing; the constant Lord of production;

*b.* Creating without end; the Lord of creating.

## 16

*a.* Those who recognize Heaven and Earth, the Sovereign, Parents, and Teachers, cannot stray far from the correct path of doctrine and virtue.

*b.* Improvement of moral character is to be found in benevolence, righteousness, propriety, knowledge, and sincerity, which are the sources of virtue and holiness.

## 17

*a.* The whole heaven and earth, men and things, establish the Doctrine, but famous images are not honoured.

*b.* United Sovereign, Parents, Teachers, and Friends establish the religion ; it is not inanity.

The following Hebrew lines given by me are, with the exception of a few inscriptions, only probable parallels, or possible sources of the translation of the Chinese text. It is an expression of thought in spirit but not in words, the exceptions being parallels in words also. As Mr. Budd has pointed out, it is difficult to know what was exactly meant.

In presenting this article, I feel justified in giving it the title עקרי הדת לבני ישראל הציניים 'The Principles of Faith of the Chinese Jews', for the reason that in the seventeen parallels which I have endeavoured to give, we have no fewer than ten out of the thirteen Articles of Faith. These ten, I have supplied wherever they occur, between parentheses at the end of each parallel. Some of these inscriptions are repeated, and in two cases as often as four times.

The Articles of Faith used by me are those which we, in the East, recite every day at the conclusion of the morning service, and are to be found in the Prayer Book תפלת החודש of the Eastern Sephardim. They are as follows :

הרי אני מאמין באמונה שלימה בשלש עשרה עיקרים של התורה הקדושה  
 (א) שהקב"ה מצוי ומשגיח (ב) והוא אחד (ג) ואין לו גוף ואין לו דמות  
 הגוף (ד) ושהוא קדמון לכל קדומים (ה) ואין עבודה לזולתו (ו) ויודע  
 מחשבות בני אדם (ז) ונבואת משה רבינו עליו השלום אמת (ח) ושהוא  
 ארון לכל הנביאים (ט) ושהתורה נתונה מן השמים (י) ושלא תשתנה  
 בשום זמן חס ושלום (יא) ושהקב"ה מעניש לרשעים ומשלם שכר טוב  
 לצדיקים (יב) ושיבא מלך המשיח (יג) ושהמתים עתידים להחיות.  
 יהי רצון מלפניך ה' אלהינו ואלהי אבותינו שתכופ יצרנו לעבודתך כל  
 ימי חיינו תמיד אמן כן יהי רצון:

Although I have not found here Articles 6, 12, and 13 yet, in all probability, there were hangings or tablets recording such beliefs, and they must have disappeared during the ages. From the Jesuits of the eighteenth century we learn that the Chinese Jews believed also in the resurrection of the dead—תחיית המתים.

I hereby express my gratitude to Mr. Reuben Abraham for so kindly presenting me with the precious manuscript and thus being instrumental in its publication.

It is my good fortune to be the first to treat these inscriptions in a Jewish style and to find parallels in our holy literature for those beliefs and sayings of our brethren, the Chinese Jews, which were inscribed upon the tablets that hung on the walls of their ancient synagogue in Kai-fung-foo.

### עקרי הדת לבני ישראל הצינים

א'

א'

ושמרת את מצות ה' אלהיך ללכת בדרכיו וליראה אתו (דברים ח' ו') :  
 (= ואין עבודה לזולתו):

ודרשו את שלום העיר אשר הגלית אתכם שמה והתפללו בעדה אל ה'  
 וגו' (ירמ' כ"ט ז') :

(Reverence Heaven and pray for blessings on the country.)

ב'

עברו את ה' ביראה וגו' (תהלים ב' י"א): (= ואין עבודה לזולתו);  
(Reverence and fear the Glorious Heaven.)

ג'

ה' בשמים הכין כסאו ומלכותו בכל משלה (תהלים ק"ג י"ט): לך ה'  
הגדלה והגבורה והתפארת והנצח וההוד כי כל בשמים ובארץ לך ה'  
הממלכה והמתנשא לכל לראש (דברי הימים א'. כ"ט י"א):  
(The Glorious Heaven—the Supreme Ruler!)

ד'

שמע ישראל ה' אלהינו ה' אחד (דברים ו' ד'):  
(By Heaven's command proclaim (the principles.)

ה'

. . . השכל וידע אותי כי אני ה' וגו' (ירמ' ט' כ"ג): (= ואין עבודה  
לזולתו);  
(Intelligently serve the Supreme Ruler.)

ו'

. . . מצות ה' ברה מאירת עינים (תהלים י"ט ט'):  
(Lord of the Pure and True Religion.)

ז'

לא תעשה לך פסל וכל תמונה וגו' (שמות כ' ד'): (= ואין עבודה לזולתו);  
(Images have no part in this Religion.)

ח'

. . . משפטי ה' אמת צדקו יחדו (תהלים י"ט י'): וזהו שאמר המשורר  
משפטי ה' אמת צדקו יחדו אמר אמת על שעור העונשים ואמר צדקו יחדו  
על עונשי העולם הזה עם טובת העולם הבא או ההפך. (עקרים מאמר א'  
פרק ו'): (= שהקב"ה מעניש לרשעים ומשלם שכר טוב לצדיקים):  
(The Law of this Religion is Heaven's Truth.)

ט'

לא תעשה לך פסל וכל תמונה וגו': לא תשתחוה להם ולא תעבדם וגו'  
(שמות כ'. ד'-ה'):  
(Image (worship) is not a part of this Law.)



... את האלהים ירא וגו' (קהלת י"ב י"ג):  
 ... והתעלמת מהם (דברים כ"ב א') גדול כבוד הבריות שדוחה את לא  
 תעשה שבתורה (שבת פ"א ע"ב):  
 (Reverence Heaven and respect men.)

## י"א

א' ויברא אלהים את האדם וגו' (בראשית א' כ"ז):  
 ויאמר אלהים הנה נתתי לכם את כל עשב זרע זרע אשר על פני כל הארץ  
 ואת כל העץ אשר בו פרי עין זרע זרע לכם יהי לאכלה (בראשית א'  
 כ"ט): (= שהקב"ה משניח):  
 ב' וייצר ה' אלהים את האדם עפר מן האדמה ויפח באפיו נשמת חיים וגו'  
 (בראשית ב' ז):

ה' קני ראשית דרכו קדם מפעליו מאז (משלי ח' כ"ב):  
 (a. [He] creates and nourishes; [His] Doctrine contains  
 all production and sustenance;

b. [He] collected together the breath and settled the  
 forms: the Doctrine existed before form and breath.)

## י"ב

א' ... כי מן השמים דברתי עמכם (שמות כ' כ"ב): (= ושהתורה נתונה  
 מן השמים):  
 [שלשה וחמשים פרשיות כוללות את התורה כולה]:  
 ויכלו השמים והארץ וכל צבאם (בראשית ב' א'):

ב' והייתם קדשים וגו' (ויקרא י"א מ"ה):  
 עשרים ושתים [עם פִּזְנִיָּךְ כ"ז] אותיות חקקן חצבן שקלן והמירן צרפן  
 וצר בהם נפש כל היצור ונפש כל העתיד לצור (ספר יצירה פרק ב'  
 משנה ב'):

ומה שתקנו לומר אלפא ביתא ביוצר של חול ושל שבת להצדיע כי לא  
 נתקיימו שמים וארץ ותולדותיהם אלא בעבור התורה שנאמר אם לא בריתי  
 יומם ולילה חקות שמים וארץ לא שמתי (ירמ' ל"ג כ"ה). והתורה כלה  
 יוצאת מאותיות אלפא ביתא כ"ב אותיות וזהו שאמר הכתוב נגילה  
 ונשמחה בך (שיר השירים א' ד'). ואומר במדרש חזית א"ר יצחק בך  
 בכ"ב אותיות שכתבת בהן את התורה והפוך כ"ב ויהי בך. (אבודרהם  
 בסדר תפלות החול): [כ"ב אותיות עם פִּזְנִיָּךְ יעלו כ"ז]:

(a. The Source of the Doctrine is from Heaven ; fifty-three chapters contain the complete Doctrine of the production of the heavens, the earth, and men.

b. The foundation of the Religion is in holiness ; twenty-seven characters ( $27 = 22$  letters and 5 finals) can transmit the hidden meaning of mind, doctrine, and learning.)

י"ג

א' אתה נמצא. ולא ישיגך שמע און ולא ראות עין. ולא ישלוט בך איך ולמה ואין: אתה נמצא. אבל לעצמך. ואין לאחר עמך: אתה נמצא. ובטרם היות כל זמן היית. ובלי מקום חנית: אתה נמצא. וסודך הנעלם. ומי ישיגנו. עמוק עמוק מי ימצאנו: (כתר מלכות לר' שלמה בן גבירול ז"ל): (= שהקב"ה מצוי. ושהוא אחד. ואין לו גוף ואין לו דמות הגוף:)

ב' אך העבודה הצפונה היא חובת הלבבות והיא שניחד האל בלבבותינו ושנאמין בו ובתורתו ושנקבל יחודו ונירא אותו ונכנע מפניו ונבוש ממנו ונאהב אותו ונבטח בו ונמסור נפשותינו אליו ושנפרוש מאשר ישנא ושניחד מעשינו לשמו ושנתבונן בטובותיו והדומה לזה ממה שיגמר במחשבת הלב הגוף ומצפוננו מבלי איברי הנראים ממנו וכו' (חובת הלבבות לרבינו בחיי ז"ל. הקדמה חלק א'):

(a. Although existing (it) is not in images; although not (existing) (it) is not lost in vacuity: the Doctrine is still outside the existing and non-existing.

b. Ritual is (derived) from honour given to Heaven ; righteousness is the law of the heart: (but the Source) always existed before ritual and righteousness.)

י"ד

א' . . . כי מן השמים דברתי עמכם (שמות כ' כ"ב): (= ושהתורה נתונה מן השמים:)

התורה מן השמים והוא שנאמין כי כל התורה הזאת הנתונה על ידי משה רבינו ע"ה שהיא כולה מפי הנבורה כלומר שהגיעה אליו כולה מאת הש"י (עין היסוד השמיני בפירוש המשניות להרמב"ם ז"ל פרק עשירי דמסכת סנהדרין:)

לא תעשה לך פסל וכל תמונה וגו' (שמות כ' ד'):

ב' תורה צוה לנו משה מורשה קהלת יעקב (דברים ל"ג ד'): (= ונבואת משה רבינו ע"ה אמת: ושהוא אדון לכל הנביאים);  
 תורת ה' תמימה וגו' (תהלים י"ט ח'): הדבר השלם הוא אשר לא ידומה עליו תוספת ולא חסרון ואחר שנמצא דויד יתאר תורת השם כשהיא תמימה הנה אי אפשר שיהי' בה שום חסרון להגעת שלמותה ותכליתה (עקרים מאמר ג' פרק כ"ג): (= ושהתורה לא תשתנה בשום זמן חס ושלום);

(a. This Religion was established by Ah-lo; the principles of the Law do not (permit) images;

b. The Scriptures were transmitted by Mēh-shê; the Doctrine is the original and true one.)

ט"ו

א'-ב' הלא ידעת אם לא שמעת אלהי עולם ה' בורא קצות הארץ לא יעף ולא ינע אין חקר לתבונתו (יישעי' מ' כ"ח): (= והוא קדמון לכל קדומים);  
 אני מאמין באמונה שלמה שהבורא יתברך שמו הוא בורא ומנהיג לכל הברואים והוא לבדו עשה ועושה ויעשה לכל המעשים: (עקר א' במחזור אשכנזים);

(a. Unceasingly producing; the constant Lord of production;

b. Creating without end; the Lord of creating.)

ט"ז

א' הן לה' אלהיך השמים ושמי השמים הארץ וכל אשר בה (דברים י' י"ד):  
 ירא את ה' בני ומלך וגו' (משלי כ"ד כ"א):  
 כבד את אביך ואח אביך וגו' (שמות כ' י"ב):  
 איש אמו ואביו תיראו (ויקרא י"ט ג') מלמד ששניהם שקולין (כריתות כ"ח ע"א):

מורא רבך כמורא שמים (אבות פרק ד' הלכה י"ב):

ב' הניד לך אדם מה טוב ומה ה' דורש ממך כי אם עשות משפט ואהבת חסד והצנע לכת עם אלהיך (מיכה ו' ח'):  
 תחלת חכמה יראת ה' ודעת קדשים בינה (משלי ט' י'):  
 תמים תהי' עם ה' אלהיך (דברים י"ח י"ג):

(a. Those who recognize Heaven and Earth, the Sovereign, Parents and Teachers, cannot stray far from the correct path of doctrine and virtue.

b. Improvement of moral character is to be found in benevolence, righteousness, propriety, knowledge, and sincerity, which are the sources of virtue and holiness.)

י"ן

א' לך ה' הגדלה והנבירה והתפארת והנצח וההוד כי כל בשמים ובארץ לך ה' הממלכה והמתנשא לכל לראש (דברי הימים א'. כ"ט י"א):

לך ה' הגדולה זו מעשה בראשית (= שהקב"ה מצוי) . . . והנבירה זו יציאת מצרים (= שהקב"ה משגיח) (ברכות נ"ח ע"א):

ופן תשא עיניך השמימה וראית את השמש ואת הירח ואת הכוכבים כל צבא השמים ונדרחת והשתחווית להם ועבדתם וגו' (דברים ד' י"ט):

ב' ירא את ה' בני ומלך וגו' (משלי כ"ד כ"א):

כבר את אביך ואת אמך וגו' (שמות כ' י"ב):

איש אמו ואביו תיראו וגו' (ויקרא י"ט ג') מלמד ששניהם שקולין (כריתות כ"ח ע"א):

מורא רבך כמורא שמים (אבות פרק ד' הלכה י"ב):

ואהבת לרעך כמוך וגו' (ויקרא י"ט י"ח):

(a. The whole heaven and earth, men and things, establish the Doctrine, but famous images are not honoured.

b. United Sovereign, Parents, Teachers, and Friends, establish the religion; it is not inanity.)

#### A HEBREW LETTER TO THE JEWS OF KAI-FUNG-FOO.

While writing about the Kai-fung-foo Jews, it would be of interest to give here a copy of an unpublished Hebrew letter which was addressed to them in 1850.

The document (Codex Sassoon, No. 54) which was kindly given to me by the late Mr. S. M. Moses in 1908, must have come to him through his father who was once

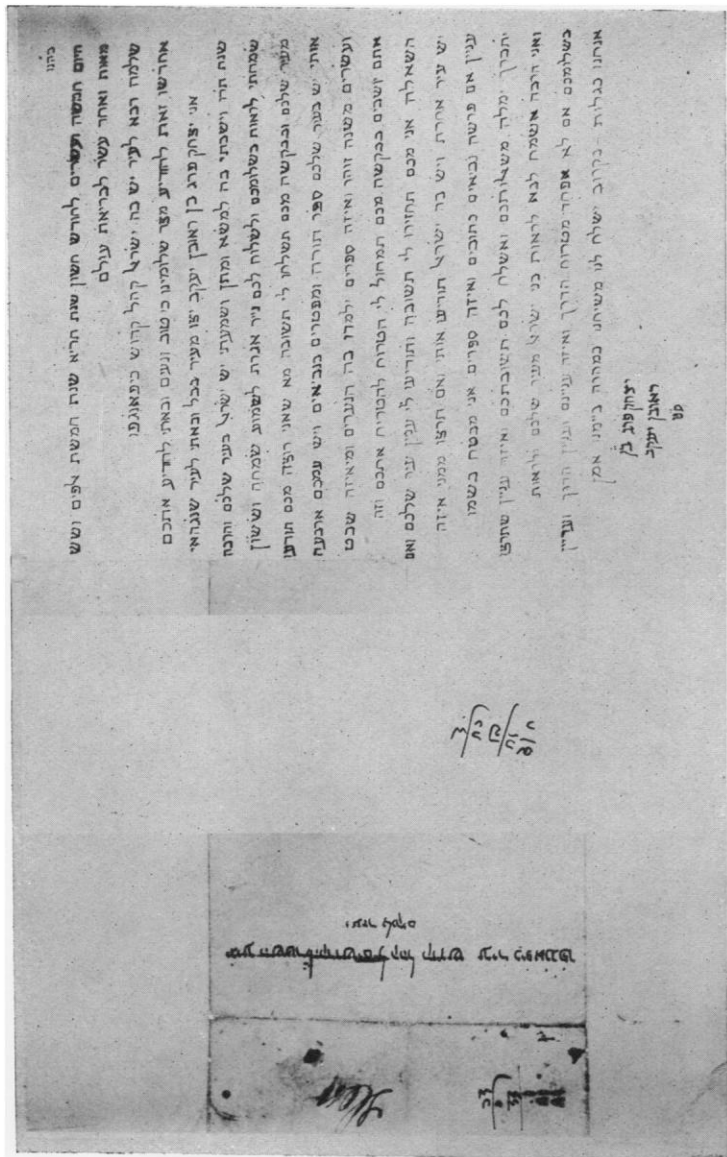


FIG. 4. REDUCED FACSIMILE OF CODEX SASOON NO. 54

trading in partnership with the writer of this letter, Isaac Faraj ben Reuben Jacob. It is written in large square Hebrew characters on one side of a thin, folded sheet of light-blue paper measuring  $16\frac{1}{8}$  by  $10\frac{1}{4}$  inches. The letter is folded so as to make the second half of the sheet serve as an envelope, and on it is the address as follows:—**יניע השטר—להקדושים לקהל קדוש עיר כי פאנפו יעור אלוקים**—this letter is to the holy people, the holy congregation in the city of Kai-fung-foo; God shall help [her] (Ps. 46. 6). On the back of the addressed page there are two vertical lines in Chinese, of which the following is a translation: 'If you have a letter in reply to this send it to Shang-hai town care of Sassoon Company.'

An interesting reference to a somewhat similar letter written about the same time is to be found in *The Jews at K'ae-fung-foo*, by the Rev. G. Smith (p. viii). It is as follows:—'Three Jewish merchants also, from Bagdad, resident at Shanghae, and connected with the opulent Jewish firm of Sassoon & Co. at Canton, contributed valuable help; one of them having written a letter in Hebrew to their Jewish co-religionists at K'hae-fung-foo, for the purpose of introducing the two Chinese messengers, and inviting the Jews to visit Shanghae.'

It may be remarked that Isaac Faraj's eldest son, Joseph Raḥamim died in Shang-hai and was the first Jew to be buried in the cemetery there.

In the name of God shall we do and prosper.

This the 25th day of the month of Ḥeshwan, in the year [5]611—the year five thousand and six hundred and eleven from the creation of the world (= 1850).

Great peace be unto the city wherein there is the holy congregation of Israel, Kai-fung-foo!

After due inquiry about your good health and well-being: this is to inform you that our health is good and pleasant, and I have come to inform you that I am Isaac Faraj the son of Reuben Jacob, may his Creator preserve him and keep him alive, from Babylon (Baghdad), and I came to the city of Shang-hai in the year [5]606 (=1845-6), and I settled there for trading purposes. And I have heard that there are Israelites in your city, and I am very pleased to be cognisant of your welfare, and to send you a letter so as to hear news of joy and happiness from your city, and I beg you to send me a reply to what I ask you. Let me know: is there a scroll of the Law in your city? and do you read the Haftarothe from the Prophets? and do you possess the four and twenty books of the Bible; the Mishna and the Zohar? and in what books do the children learn? and from which tribe are you? I beg you to excuse the trouble I am putting you to, and I request you to answer me, and further to tell me all about your city, and to let me know if there is another city wherein Israelites are to be found. And if you wish to have anything from me, such as Pentateuchs, Prophets, and Hagiographa, and any other books, I have faith in His Name, may He be blessed, that He will fulfil your wishes, and I shall send you an answer, and whatever else you wish for. It would have given me great pleasure to come and visit the children of Israel of your city and to learn of your welfare, had it not been that I were afraid of the fatigue of the journey, and certain other matters, and travelling difficulties. And we are still in exile; may He shortly send us our Messiah, speedily in our time, Amen.

Isaac Faraj ben Reuben Jacob, may his end be good.